



# Department of Justice

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Southern District of Ohio

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## **CHIROPRACTIC CONSULTANT SENTENCED FOR DEFRAUDING PRIVATE INSURANCE COMPANIES AND OHIO BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

*41 months imprisonment and \$1.1 million restitution*

COLUMBUS – Markell T. Boulis was sentenced in United States District Court here today to 41 months imprisonment and ordered to pay restitution of \$1,100,000 to eleven insurance companies including the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation that he and two of his companies cheated in a four-year fraudulent billing scheme between 1999 and 2003. Boulis was also ordered to pay restitution to Medicare and the Internal Revenue Service.

Boulis and two of his companies, Practice Solutions, Inc., and National Insurance Auditors, LLC, pled guilty to one count of health care fraud on April 7, 2006.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Lamont Pugh, III, Regional Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General; Timothy P. Murphy, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation Cincinnati Field Division; Ann Womer Benjamin, Director of the Ohio Department of Insurance, William Mabe, Administrator, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, and Kelly A. Caudill, Executive Director of the Ohio Chiropractic Board, announced the sentence handed down today by Senior United States District Judge John D. Holschuh.

The agencies began investigating Boulis in November, 2002. The investigation uncovered that Boulis set up a "practice management" consulting business for chiropractors roughly three months after the state of Pennsylvania suspended his chiropractor's license.

Practice Solutions, Inc. would sponsor "practice building" seminars for chiropractors in Ohio and throughout the country. During the seminars, participants were told that National Insurance Auditors, LLC, was a separate, independent company comprised of "experts" in the review of patient records. This company could help attendees identify "lost" income resulting from services which had not been properly reimbursed by insurers due to incorrect coding, or a failure to bill for the services. Chiropractors were encouraged to contract with National Insurance Auditors, LLC, for "back-billing" services as a means to generate additional income.

Boulis never told attendees that he owned both companies.

As part of the scheme, Boulis' associates would visit the offices of the contracting chiropractor as representatives of National Insurance Auditors, LLC. They said they would

conduct a comprehensive audit of the chiropractors' records for services performed but never billed.

"In fact, few of the so-called auditors had any training or experience with medical procedures or coding," Lockhart said. "All they did was obtain a copy of the chiropractors' billing history for the previous 12 to 18 months and forward the information to a health care billing company that Boulis had a contract with."

The billing company was directed to submit additional claims to the various insurers for every patient for every prior date of service during the specified time period. This was accomplished by modifying the medical billing codes used, indicating that new or additional services had been performed. The payments for such re-billed claims were to be split 50-50 between the chiropractors and National Insurance Auditors, LLC, and most payments were to be sent directly to Boulis' home.

Boulis, age 44, lists his home as Presto, Pennsylvania but has recently been living in Georgia.

"This was a brazen attempt by Mr. Boulis and his cohorts to circumvent the law to defraud insurance companies and the government," Director Womer Benjamin said. "I commend the members of the joint investigation for their commitment and for ensuring this type of behavior is punished to the fullest extent of the law."

Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by agents and members of the Southern Ohio Health Care Fraud Task Force.

Lockhart urged anyone who suspects health care fraud to contact the Inspector General's Hotline at 1-800-HHS-TIPS (447-8477). Consumers and insurance professionals who suspect insurance fraud should contact the Ohio Department of Insurance's fraud hotline at 1-800-686-1527.

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